DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 270 704 CG 019 161

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TITLE Adolescents' Constructs of Self, Parents and Peers.
PUB DATE Apr 85
NOTE 27p.; Portions of this paper presented at the Meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development (Toronto, Canada, April 25-28, 1985).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; College Students; Fathers; Friendship; Higher Education; Mothers; *Parent Child Relationship; *Peer Relationship; *Personality Traits; *Self Concept; *Self Esteem

ABSTRACT

One influence on the adolescent's sense of affective self is the relationship with significant others. A study was conducted to examine the differential influence of relationships with parents and peers on the adolescent's sense of affective self. Twenty-five male and 25 female University of Denver undergraduates provided descriptions of personality traits for self, mother, father, and best friend; perceptions of relationships with parents and peers; and self- and other-esteem ratings. Subjects were given one week to complete those parts of the questionnaire that asked them to describe their own and others' personalities and the relationships between themselves and others. The results revealed that self-esteem was related significantly to projected mother and father esteem, but it was independent of projected best-friend esteem. In contrast, significantly more traits and a higher percentage of positive traits were shared with best friend than with parents. Perceptions of increased distance in the relationship with mother were related to the perception of increased negative and decreased positive traits in the mother, but not the self. Relationships with fathers were perceived to be more distant than relationships with mothers or peers, yet distance was not related to the sense of self or father. These results suggest that mothers, fathers, and peers serve important, but different, affective functions for adolescents. (Author/NB)

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ADOLESCENTS' CONSTRUCTS OF SELF, PARENTS AND PEERS

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Portions of this paper were presented at the Meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development, Toronto, 1985. This research was supported by NIMH postdoctoral fellowship 15442 awarded through the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center to the first author. We thank the subjects who participated in the study and Maureen Callanan and Lois Swigart for comments on the manuscript. Author's address: Department of Psychology - 17, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA 18015.

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Abstract

One influence on the adolescent's sense of affective self is the relationship with significant others, and the purpose of this study was to examine the differential influence of relationships with parents and peers. Constructs of self, parents, and peers were obtained as well as portrayals of the relationships between self and others. At the age of 19, self-esteem was related significantly to projected mother (r = .89) and father (r = .76) esteem, but was independent of projected best-friend esteem (r = -.06). In contrast, significantly more traits and a higher percentage of positive traits were shared with best friend than with parents. Perceptions of increased distance in the relationship with mother were related to the perception of increased negative and decreased positive traits in the mother, but not the self. Relationships with fathers were perceived to be more distant than relationships with mothers or peers, yet distance was not related to the sense of self or father. We interpreted these results as indicating that mothers, fathers, and peers served important--but different--affective functions for adolescents.

ADOLESCENTS' CONSTRUCTS OF SELF, PARENTS AND PEERS

One of the goals of adolescence is to construct an adult self from the child self. Following the lead of Mahler, Pine and Bergman (1975), who offered an account of how the infant's sense of self derives through the process of separation/individuation, many theorists of adolescent identity formation hypothesize that this process recurs in adolescence (Blos, 1967; Cooper, Grotevant & Condon, 1983; White, Speisman & Costos, 1983). While a global similarity may obtain between the process of separation from parents in infancy and adolescence, the nature of the process should be different for the adolescent than the toddler. In part, because the adolescent is embedded in a larger social network, peers influence the adolescent's sense of identity in a way unavailable to the toddler. The transformation of identity during adolescence may occur through a restructuring of relationships and attachments to others and it has been hypothesized that this restructuring occurs through a process of selective identifications with parents and peers (Blos, 1967; Erikson, 1968).

The current debate about the relative influence of parents and peers on adolescent behavior can be recast as an attempt to understand the mechanisms by which both parents and peers influence the transition from the child to the adult self. One approach to the debate about the relative influence of parents and peers has been to note the areas of influence each has on adolescent opinions or decision making. While historically the relative influence of peers and parents has been seen as dichotomous [e.g., parental influence is supplanted by peer influence (Coleman, 1961)], recent research suggests that parents and peers both play important functions for adolescents, but in different domains: Parents are seen as influencing career goals and future plans, while peer advice is sought for questions of popularity in peer society (Brittain, 1963; 1968; 1969; Musgrove, 1963). Others have suggested that in most cases adolescents choose peers that mirror parental values so that the dichotomy between parents and peers is more apparent than real (Lesser & Kandel, 1969; Offer & Offer, 1976).

Another approach to the question of parent/peer influence is to examine the types of attachments adolescents have to friends and parents. Adolescent self esteem and life satisfaction are related to both peer and parent relationships, but with affect towards parents accounting for twice as much of the variance of self esteem and almost three times as much of the variance of life satisfaction scores than affect towards peers (Greenberg, Siegel & Leitsch, 1983). Adolescents' security of attachment has also been found to influence both how peers perceive adolescents as well as how they perceived their relationships with parents and peers (Kobak & Sceery, in press). These important papers underscore the affective importance of attachment to both parents and peers for adolescents, yet do not address directly the question of how adolescents' self conceptions are

related to their conceptions of significant others and their relationships with significant others.

Investigators within the attachment paradigm have suggested that the conceptions of self and other arise from the internal working models of significant relationships, (Bowlby, 1980; Bretherton, 1985; Kobak & Sceery, in press). Internal working models have been defined as generalized script representations of attachment events and figures (Bretherton, 1985; Shank & Abelson, 1977; Stern, 1985). The notion of the internal working model bears striking resemblance to the notion of schemata (Markus, 1977), construct systems (Kelly, 1955), or theories (Epstein, 1973) that characterize adult's conceptions of self. At the most general level, all of these concepts refer to ways of structuring information about the interpersonal world as they relate to the self. At a more specific level, however, the concept of internal working models has been directed at relationship issues, while concepts such as schema, construct systems, and self-theories have been derived to account for the person's self-concept. Currently, it is under debate whether young infants differentiate between the sense of self, other and the understanding of relationships with significant others (see Bretherton, in press; Pipp, Fischer & Jennings, in press; Stern, 1985).

Late adolescents, however, are more separated from parents than are infants--physically, cognitively and perhaps emotionally. Our general purpose of the present study was to examine the relation between construct systems of self, construct systems of others, and construct systems of the relationship in late adolescents. We chose late adolescence as a period to study because this is a time when middle-class children leave the family home and the increased physical distance from parents may encourage a re-evaluation of self, other and relationships with parents and peers. (Pipp, Shaver, Jennings, Lamborn & Fischer, 1985; Shaver, Furman & Burhmester, 1985; Sullivan & Sullivan, 1980).

An adolescent's sense of self has been found to be different from their sense of others. Trait adjectives describing familiar and well-liked people such as the self or best friend are remembered better than those describing unfamiliar people (Bower & Gilligan, 1979; Ferguson, Rule & Carlson, 1983; Keenan & Baillet, 1980;) although the basis for this finding is in dispute (Klein & Kihlstrom, 1986). It is unclear, however, whether individuals' construct systems for others vary as a function of individuals who are equally important affectively but differ in the type of relationship. The first aim of the present study was to examine adolescents' construct systems of self, parents and peers in order to determine if significant differences in descriptions would obtain. Following previous literature, we hypothesized that the construct systems of self would be more detailed than those of others. It was of interest whether differences would obtain in the schematic detail in adolescent descriptions of parents and peers.

A second aim of this study was to examine possible differential identifications between parents and peers. Following Kelly (1955), we assumed that because these descriptions are generated from the

subject's construct systems, similarities of traits between self and others represented selective identifications with others (Jones, 1961). Two types of identification were assessed: trait identification and affective identification. Trait identification refers to the number of similar traits portrayed between the self and the others. During late adolescence, individuals may perceive a differential similarity between parents and peers.

Affective identification between self and others may be both global and discrete. At the global level, one's affect towards self and others may be determined by esteem measures. While there is a vast literature on the development of self-esteem, there has been relatively little empirical work on "other-esteem." (See Harter, 1983, for a review.) If self-esteem is broadly defined as an internalized affective construct for self, "other-esteem" may be defined as internalized affective constructs of others. Other-esteem, then, may change as a function of the relationship and may play a different role in a person's self-esteem as a function of the relationship. The present study was designed to assess whether late adolescents' internalized affective constructs of self is differentially related to internalized affective constructs of parents and peers.

Affective identification may also occur at the trait level. Adolescents may construct their sense of self by internalizing those characteristics about which they feel positively and/or negatively. If adolescents attempt to separate from their parents by positively identifying with peers, one might hypothesize that greater positive identification would occur for peers than parents. Alternatively, if attachments to parents are more affectively important to adolescents than their attachments to peers, as Greenberg, et al. (1983) suggested, greater positive identification may occur with parents than peers.

A third aim was to explore the adolescent's understanding of the relationship between parents and peers, especially in conjunction with their understandings of each personality and the identifications with each. While parents and peers are both important affectively for adolescents, the type of time spent with each is different. Additionally, the dynamics of the relationship should differ depending on the function that each serves for the adolescent. We wished to examine how these differences would be translated into affective categorizations of the relationships with parents and peers.

In summary, this study was designed to assess adolescents' construct systems of self, significant others (parents and peers), and relationships with these significant others. We were interested in assessing internal working models in order to determine how the model of self was related to models of others, identifications with others, and conceptions of relationships. In particular, the study was designed to determine the differential influence of parents and peers on the understanding of self.

Method

Subjects

Subjects were 25 female and 25 male University of Denver undergraduates who participated in partial fulfillment of an introductory psychology course requirement. Their average age was 19.2 years.

All of the subjects described their biological parents, with the exception of one person who described his step-father. Forty of the subjects came from intact families, eight from divorced families, and two subjects lost one parent through death.1

Because we were interested in subjects' affective identifications with people who were currently emotionally important to them, and because we wanted to equate the affective importance of parents and peers, each subject was free to choose his/her own best friend. The average age of the best friends chosen was 20.6 years. Twenty-three of the best friends described were females and 27 were male. Twenty-nine were members of the same sex as the respondent, while 21 were of the opposite sex. The respondents had known their best friends for an average of 15.2 months.

Measures

Three different measures were devised to explore respondents' understandings of self and others: descriptions of personality traits for self and others, perceptions of relationships with parents and peers, and self and other esteem ratings.2

Descriptions of Personality Traits. Personality descriptions were obtained by having adolescents delineate their own, their mother's, their father's, and best friend's personality traits. Because we were interested in subjects' own internally generated identificatory patterns, a free-format was used whereby each subject generated his/her own descriptions. The number and types of traits or attributes were, thereby, under each subject's control. This methodology was used in order to maximize salient and, we hoped, affectively important descriptions of self and other. That is, the profiles would reflect the adolescents' self-schemata (Markus, 1979) and so similarities detected between self and others would be those salient to the respondents.

Subjects were asked to portray their own, their mother's, father's, and best friend's personality by creating four separate diagrams. For each diagram, subjects were instructed to enclose each trait in a circle and then arrange the circles in a manner which best represented how the traits fitted together in the personality they were describing.3 The number and specific traits to be included were left to the discretion of the subjects, although subjects were asked to describe each person fully. Examples of personality diagrams that were obtained from our subjects are shown in Figure 1.

In order to assess the affective valence of each of the traits

noted, subjects were asked to judge how they felt about each trait. Subjects chose between four affective valences and noted the valence in each trait circle on the original drawing. When subjects felt positive about a trait, they noted a "+" in those trait circles; when they felt negative about a trait, a "-" was noted; when they felt neutral, a "0" was noted, and when a trait caused both positive and negative emotions, ambivalence was noted by a "#."

Subjects completed the four personality diagrams before they assigned the affective valences in order to eliminate the possibility of bias. That is, we wanted the subjects to pattern the traits in a way which was closest to their construct systems without the suggestion that they might do so by affective grouping.

Perceptions of Relationships. Adolescents' perceptions of the current relationship between self, mother, father, and peer were obtained by using the method described by Pipp, et al. (1985). Adolescents were asked to draw two circles, one representing the self and one representing the other, "in relation to each other as you believe best illustrates your current relationship with _____ (mother, father, or best friend)." Subjects completed three drawings, one for each relationship. Examples from our subjects are shown in Figure 2.

These drawings were then scored according to the size of circle, distance between circles, and amount of intersection or overlap between circles. Interrater reliability was between .94 and 1.00 for these categories.

Self and Other Esteem. In order to assess global affective identification, we asked each subject to rate their own esteem and to estimate, or project, the esteem of parents and peers. We assumed that since these measures are all within the individual's construct system, one might expect greater identification between self and others to be reflected in high correspondances between the esteem levels of self and those projected to others.

Global affective senses of self and others were obtained by Rosenberg's (1979) Self-Esteem Scale for the self and modified versions for the others. The other versions of the scale were obtained by changing first-person referents to third-person. For example, the self version of the question "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself" became, "On the whole, she is satisfied with herself" for the mother version. For the self version of the task, Rosenberg's general instructions were given and, for the other versions, Rosenberg's instructions were modified to indicate that each subject should answer as they felt the person under question (mother, father or best friend) felt about him or herself.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered in two sessions. In the first session, subjects were given those parts of the questionnaire that asked them to describe their own and others' personalities and the relationships between themselves and others. Each subject was given a week in which to complete this portion of the questionnaire. This period of time was chosen in order to obtain thoughtful and careful

responses and because pilot subjects indicated that they needed this amount of time to complete this part of the questionnaire. Interviews with our subjects suggested that, in general, subjects approached the task by spending free time during the week thinking about how to structure their responses. After some thought, subjects then spent about an hour committing these descriptions to paper. The self and other esteem ratings were administered in a second session in groups of about 20.

Order of presentation of the self, mother, father, and best friend versions of each of the tasks were randomized across subjects.

Results

The results will be presented in four major sections. In the first we present data based on the subjects' descriptions of personality traits; in the second we describe trait identification between self and others; in the third we detail conceptions of the relationships; in the fourth self and other esteem measures are presented.

Personality Descriptions. The number of traits each person assigned when describing the self, mother, father, and best friend served as the dependent measure in 2 x 4 (Sex of Subject X Personality) mixed analysis of variance (anova) with sex as a between-subject factor and personality as a within-subject factor. A significant effect of personality, F (3,138) = 11.87, $p < .001$, revealed that subjects ascribed significantly more traits to the self, M = 12.75, than to mother, M = 9.79, father, M = 9.54, or best friend, M = 10.06. Interestingly, no significant differences were obtained in the number of traits ascribed to parents and peers.

Subjects also noted the affective valence of each trait. In general, 63.30% of all traits were judged to be positive, 18.31% were judged to be negative, 5.75% were judged to be neutral and 12.64% were perceived as causing ambivalent emotional reactions.

In order to control for the initial differences in the number of traits assigned to self and others, analyses upon the percentages of traits assigned to each affective valence were performed. A 2 X 4 (Sex of Subject X Person) anova upon the percentage of positive traits revealed significant effects of sex, F (1,46) = 7.36, $p < .01$, person described, F (3,138) = 5.30, $p < .005$, and a significant Sex x Personality interaction, F (3,138) = 5.01, $p < .005$. The means of the interaction are shown in Table 1. Male subjects, but not females, elevated the percentage of positive traits of others relative to the self, and post-hoc analyses revealed that significant differences were obtained between self and mother and self and best friend. In addition, male subjects recorded a significantly higher percentage of positive traits for their mothers than did female subjects.

Insert Table 1 About Here

An analysis of the percentage of negative traits revealed a significant effect of sex, F (1,48) = 6.55, $p < .01$, showing that female subjects portrayed the personalities with a higher percentage of negative traits, M = 22.40, than did male subjects, M = 15.81. No significant effects due to sex or person were found in analyses upon the percentages of the ambivalent or neutral traits.

Identification. We also noted the number of traits shared between the subjects' personality diagrams and the ones drawn for mother, father, and best friend in order to assess identification between self and significant others. Eighty percent of the subjects shared at least one trait with mother, 72% shared at least one trait with father, and 90% shared at least one trait with best friend. Combining both parents and peers, an average of 25.52% of the traits portrayed in the self were shared with others. A 2 X 3 (Sex of Subject X Relationship) mixed anova was calculated with the number of traits shared between self and others as the dependent measure. This analysis revealed that subjects felt that they shared significantly more traits with their best friend, M = 3.38, than with either mother, M = 2.42, or father, M = 2.29, F (2,92) = 7.95, $p < .001$.

Of those subjects who shared traits with others, an analysis of the affective valences of those traits shared with others revealed that an overwhelming percentage of the traits shared were positive, M = 73.61%, with 5.48% negative, 0.63% neutral and 3.80% ambivalent. An additional 16.48% of the shared traits were discrepant in affective valence, with the trait in one diagram labeled with one affective score and the same trait for another's personality labeled with a different valence. (See, for example, the first illustration in Figure 1 where the subject felt negatively about shyness in his own personality diagram but felt ambivalently about shyness in his best friend's diagram.) Anovas on each affective valence found that a higher percentage of positive traits were reported to be shared between self and best friend, M = 70.34%, than with mother, M = 52.90%, or father, M = 62.04%, F (2,96) = 3.39, $p < .05$. No significant effects due to sex of subject or relationship were found for the negative, neutral, ambivalent, or discrepant affective valences.

Perceptions of Relationships. In order to assess adolescents' perceptions of their relationships with parents and peers, analyses were conducted on size of circle, distance between circles, and intersection between the circles (Pipp, et al., 1985).

The size of the circles drawn were shown to be significantly different depending on the relationship portrayed. A 2 X 3 X 2 (Sex of Subject X Relationship (Mother, Father, Best Friend) X Self/Other) mixed analysis of variance revealed a significant effect of Relationship, $F(2, 96) = 5.18$, $p < .01$. Adolescents drew themselves

and their best friends with significantly larger circles, $\underline{M}$ = 46.42, than when they drew themselves and their mothers, $\underline{M}$ = 41.67, or fathers, $\underline{M}$ = 41.10.

Significantly greater distance between the self and other circles was also obtained, $\underline{F}(2, 96) = 3.55$, $\underline{p} < .05$, when drawing the relationship between self and father, $\underline{M}$ = 48.09, than the relationship with best friend, $\underline{M}$ = 31.57 or mother, $\underline{M}$ = 35.17.

Another measure of distance was the amount of intersection or overlap between the circles. These data were analyzed with a 2 X 3 (Sex of Subject X Relationship) mixed analysis of variance, and results indicated a significant Sex x Person interaction, $\underline{F}(2,96) = 3.58$, $\underline{p} < .03$. As shown in Table 2, female subjects portrayed significantly greater intersection when drawing the relationship between self and best friend than did males.

Insert Table 2 about here

The number of traits and number of shared traits portrayed in the personality diagrams were not significantly related to adolescents' descriptions of the relationships.

The affective valences in the personality diagrams, however, were related to the relationship drawings for mother and best friend. The size of the circles portraying self and best friend in the relationship drawings increased as the number of negative traits portrayed in the best friend's personality increased, $\underline{r}$'s = .45, and .42, $\underline{p} < .005$, respectively. The percentage of ambivalent traits shared with best friend increased as the amount of intersection between self and best friend in the relationship decreased, $\underline{r} = -.31$, $\underline{p} < .02$.

Relationship with mother was related to both the affective valences of traits attributed to the mother and the affective valences shared with mother. Increased distance with mother was related to subjects portraying their mother as having a smaller percentage of positive traits, $\underline{r} = -.37$, $\underline{p} < .01$, and a larger percentage of negative, $\underline{r} = .27$, $\underline{p} < .05$, and neutral traits, $\underline{r} = .34$, $\underline{p} < .005$. Greater intersection between the self and mother was also positively related to the percentage of positive traits portrayed in the mother diagram, $\underline{r} = .30$, $\underline{p} < .02$.

This general picture, however, was reversed when the percentage of traits shared between self and mother was correlated with the distance measures. Greater intersection between the self and mother circles was correspondingly related to a smaller percentage of positive traits shared with mother, $\underline{r} = -.42$, $\underline{p} < .01$, and a larger percentage of negative traits shared, $\underline{r} = .35$, $\underline{p} < .05$.

Esteem Scores. Subjects' esteem scores for self and others were analyzed by a 2 X 4 (Sex of Subject X Person) mixed analysis of variance. The Rosenberg scale is scored so that high scores indicate low self-esteem: The highest esteem possible would be represented by a score of "0" and the lowest esteem by a "10."

Male subjects had higher esteem scores, M = 1.04, than did females, M = 1.68, F (1,43) = 4.16, $p < .05$. Subjects also felt that fathers had higher esteem, M = .82, than did mothers, M = 1.56, best friends, M = 1.42, or themselves, M = 1.56, F (3,129) = 2.91, $p < .05$.

Independent of the general level of esteem, correlations between the adolescent's esteem and others indicated the self-esteem correlated highly with the two projected parental esteem scores but were essentially independent of the best friend's esteem score. The esteem of self correlated significantly and highly with the subject's projected esteem of mother, r = .89, $p < .001$, and father, r = .76, $p < .001$, but no significant correlation was found for subjects' projected esteem of the best friend, r = -.06, $p > .05$.

Discussion

Parents and peers played important--but different--affective functions for adolescents. Late adolescents strongly identified with both parents and peers but the form of the identification was different depending on the relationship. Late adolescents in our study felt that they shared more traits with their best friends than with their parents, yet greater similarity between self and projected parental esteem was obtained.

Late adolescents perceived high correspondances between their own esteem and those they projected to their parents, as evidenced by the strikingly high correlations between self esteem and the projected esteem measures for mother, r = .89, and father, r = .76. In contrast, self esteem was independent from the projected esteem of best friend, r = -.06. It may be that late adolescents are not yet emotionally separated from their parents (Blos, 1967; Greenberg, et al., 1983). Close peers, however, are more distinct and separate from the self, and so their esteem scores are independent from the self's.

While projected esteem of the best friend was independent, adolescents perceived they shared a significantly larger number of traits and higher percentage of positive traits with their best friends than with either one of their parents. In addition, adolescents drew themselves and their best friends with larger circles than they drew their relationships with mother and father. Size has been shown to be related to characteristics representing equality (Pipp, et al., 1985). Taken together, these findings suggest a mechanism of trait identification with peers which may serve enhanced feelings of equality with peers and affective separation from parents.

Adolescents conceptions of relationships were not related to conceptions of themselves, yet were related to their conceptions of their mothers and best friends, at least as measured in our study. It

may be that a focus on relationships shifts the spotlight more to the other than the self. A lover, for example, in describing the relationship extols the virtues of the one who is loved and focuses less on the self. And, someone who is angry does not detail the deficits in self that caused the argument, but rather focuses on the characteristics of the other (Nisbett, Caputo, Legan & Marcek, 1973).

A second and, to us, an intriguing pattern of results showed that the amount of distance felt in the relationship had two different effects. Increased distance from mother was related to fewer positive and greater negative characteristics of the mother, but increased distance was also related to a larger percentage of positive traits shared with the mother. This pattern of results suggest that adolescents' affective boundaries in the relationship with mother are not yet secure. It may be "safer" to internalize features of the mother when some psychological distance is maintained from her.

Different characterizations of father were obtained than with mother. If boundary issues seemed to be dominant with mother, adolescents' portrayals of their fathers were characterized by greater distance and an increase of esteem for father in comparison with self or others.

Adolescents generated more traits for self than for others, but did not differentiate between parents and peers in the number of traits generated. These findings support the notion that adolescents have more detailed schemata for self than others, but are somewhat surprising in light of previous work which suggested little difference between self and highly familiar people (Bower & Gilligan, 1979; Ferguson, Rule & Carlson, 1973; Kuiper & Rogers, 1979). In addition, women past adolescence generated the the same number of traits for self and husband and fewer for their children or their parents (Pipp & Harmon, 1986). It may be that adolescents are mid-way between separation from parents and serious attachments to peers.

Not surprisingly, the affective valence of the traits noted were highly skewed in favor of positive traits, with a ratio between positive and negative at 3.5/1. These results converge nicely with those reported by Harter and Monsour (1985) who showed that self-esteem is enhanced by attributing positive traits to the core of one's personality and negative ones to the periphery.

The ratio between positive and negative traits becomes even larger when the percentage of traits shared between self and others was calculated, with the ratio at 13.4/1, suggesting that identifications with others are predominantly positive at least at this level of description. High self-esteem may be related not to increases in positive traits in self, but instead a projection of positive traits to others. Males had higher self-esteem than did females. While no differences were obtained in the percentage of positive traits ascribed to the self between male and female subjects, male subjects elevated the percentage of positive traits for others compared to the self. Perceiving the best in others may be the best path to increased self-esteem. Males also noted a higher percentage of positive traits for mothers than did females, suggesting that it

may be that a positive view of the mother is a critical variable for increased self esteem for this age group.

The adolescent's sense of self was related to conceptions of mother, father, and best friend as well as their understandings of the relationships with each. The pattern of contribution changed as a a function of sex of subject, significant other, and relationship. For affective measures, the relation between self and other was extraordinarily high for parents, as might be expected clinically. A large percentage of subjects also perceived that they shared at least one trait with parents and peers, and more traits were perceived to be shared with peers than parents.

It is somewhat of a truism that the sense of self derives from significant others. The general aim of the present study was to explore the relation between individual's construct systems of self and other. Our data suggest that a strategy of determining the relation between construct systems of self and other is a promising one. The current emphasis on the "self" in developmental, clinical, and social psychology may be fruitfully explored by investigating how people integrate their understandings of themselves with their understandings of others.

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Footnotes

[1] Data analyses that will be presented were conducted irrespective of parental status since too few subjects whose parents had divorced or died were obtained and so few significant effects of these variables were found.

[2] Copies of the questionnaire are available on request.

[3] We asked subjects to follow these instructions in order to provide similarity in between the personality diagrams and the relationship tasks (which will be described later). For the purpose of the data presented in this study, the personality diagrams can be conceptualized as asking each subject to respond to the open-ended question "Who am I?" (Gordon, 1968; Montemayor and Eisen, 1977) for self, mother, father, and best friend.

Table 1

Percentage of Positive Traits as a Function of Person (Self, Mother, Father and Best Friend) and Sex of Subject

	Person			
Sex of subject	Self	Mother	Father	Best Friend
Female subjects	59.00	55.04	60.96	65.20
Male subjects	52.96	78.52	67.70	76.42

Table 2

Amount of Intersection Between
Self and Other Circles as a
Function of Relationships and Sex of Subject

	Mother	Father	Best Friend
Males	12.68	10.76	8.2
Females	9.64	9.00	17.04

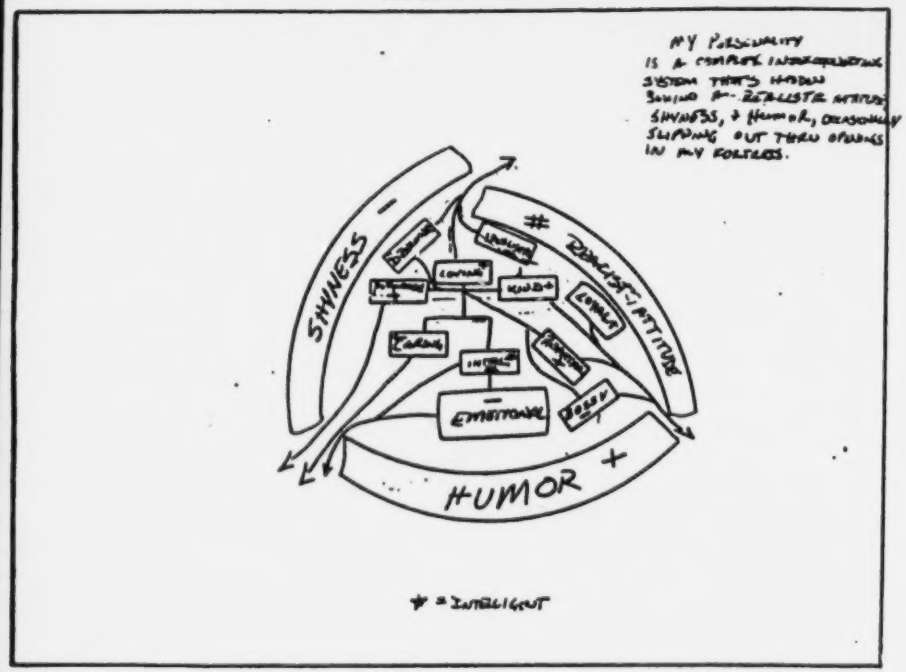
List of Figures

Figure 1. Two examples of personality diagrams of self, mother, father, and best friend

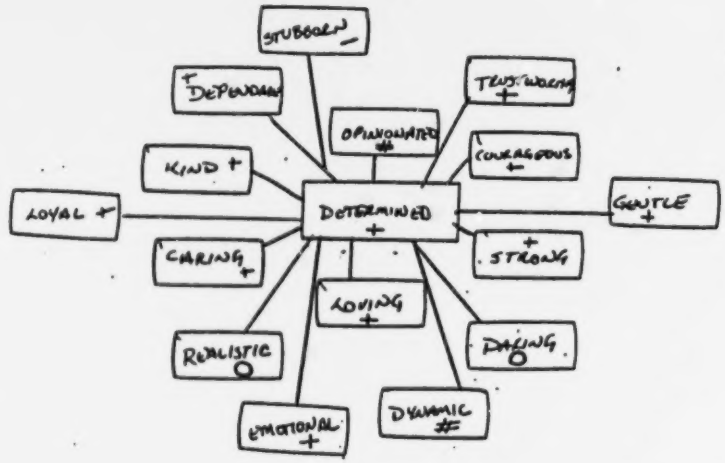
Figure 2. Two examples of the relationships portrayed for self and mother, self and father, and self and best friend

Figure 1. Example A

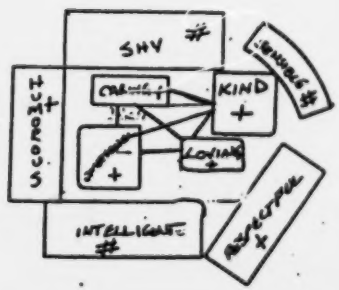
YOUR OWN PERSONALITY



YOUR MOTHER'S PERSONALITY



YOUR BEST FRIEND'S PERSONALITY



DRM HAS A LOVING, CARING, KIND, EMOTIONAL SIDE BUT HIDES IT AT TIMES BEHIND HIS SHYNESS, HIS RESPECT, HIS HUMOR, & SENSIBILITY

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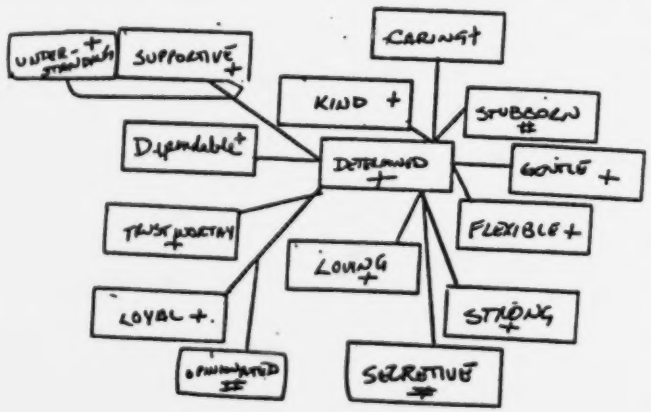
YOUR FATHER'S PERSONALITY



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

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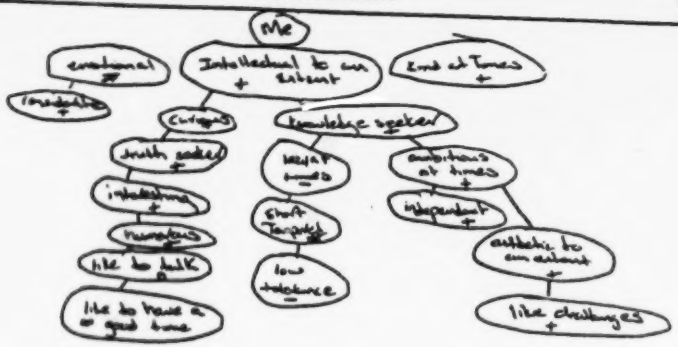
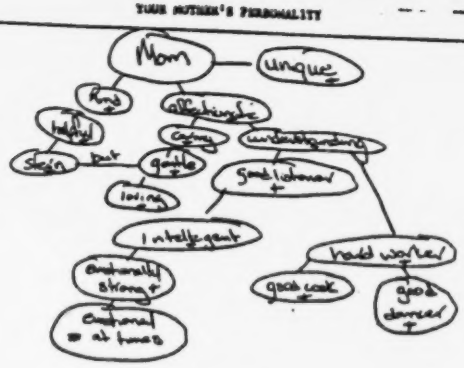
Figure 1. Example B

YOUR OWN PERSONALITY



YOUR MOTHER'S PERSONALITY



YOUR BEST FRIEND'S PERSONALITY

YOUR FATHER'S PERSONALITY

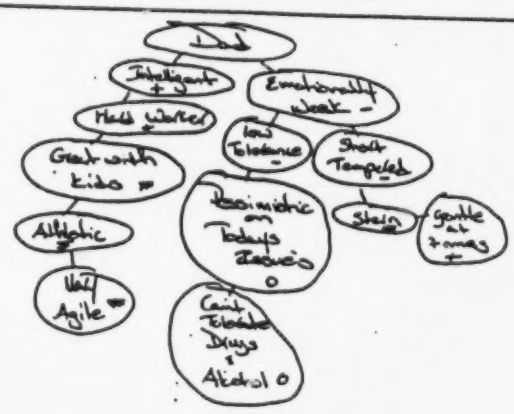


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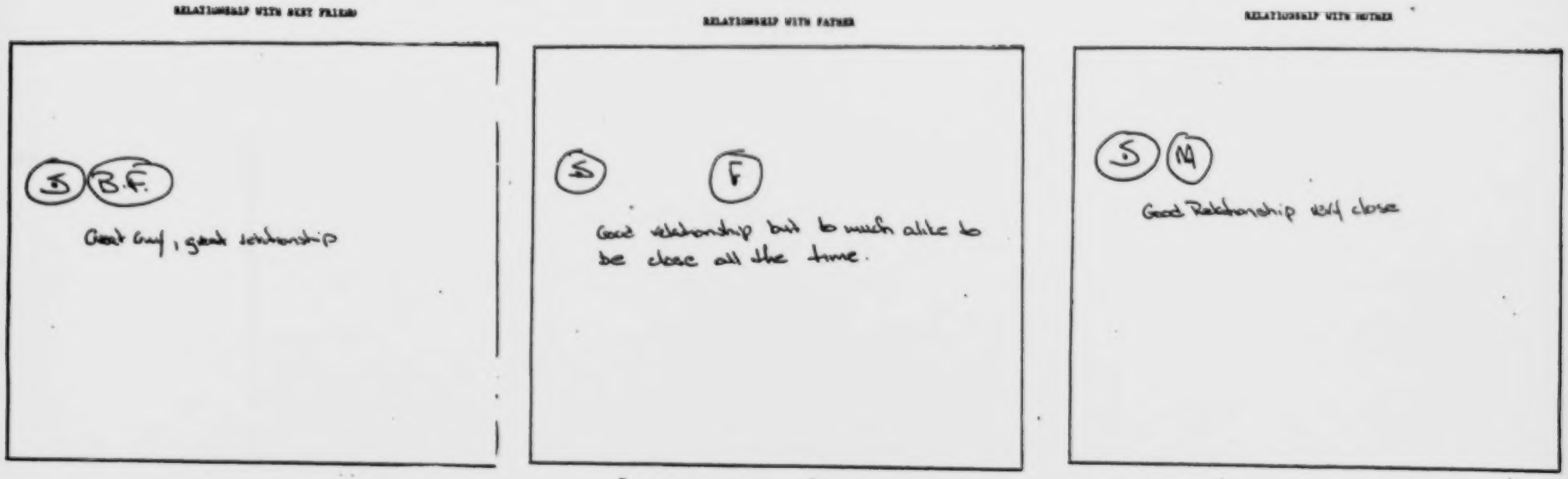
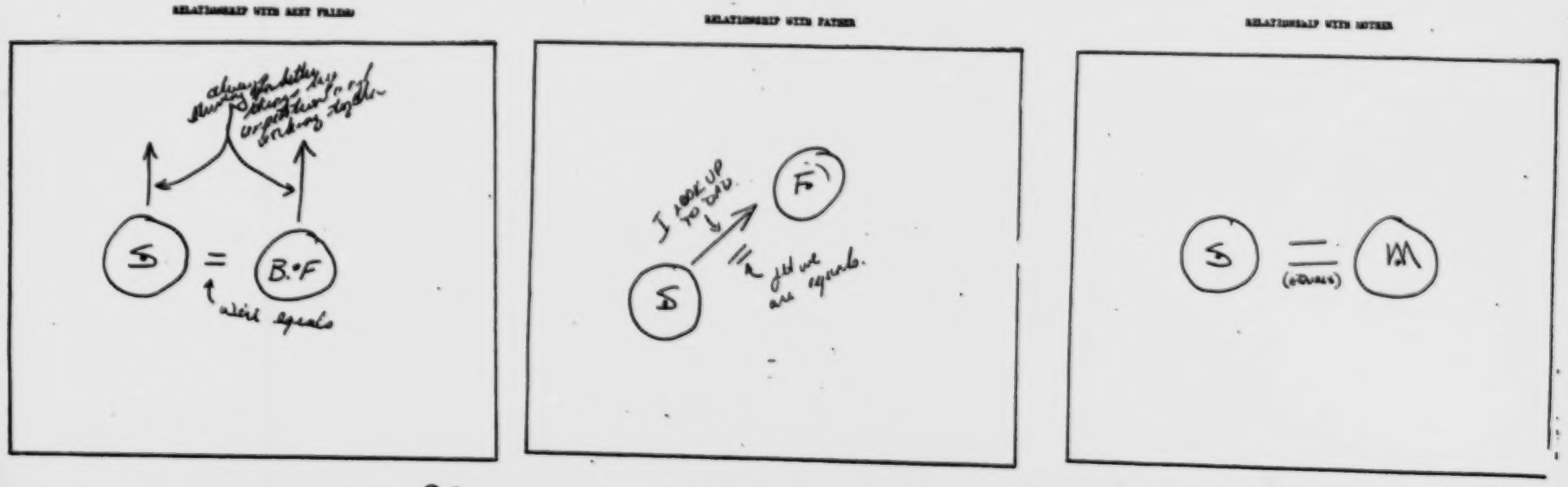
Figure 2


RELATIONSHIP WITH BEST FRIEND
S B.F.
Great Guy, great relationship
RELATIONSHIP WITH FATHER
S F
Good relationship but to much alike to be close all the time.
RELATIONSHIP WITH MOTHER
S M
Good Relationship very close

Example A



Example B

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